

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03091

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, UNGA, CU, RQ
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO CUBAN PERM REP ON PUERTO RICO

REF: A) STATE 188943, B) STATE 194454

1. AMBASSADOR YOUNG, ACCOMPANIED BY MISOFF BLACKEN, CALLED ON CUBAN AMBASSADOR RAUL ROA KOURI, AUGUST 3 TO DISCUSS PUERTO RICO AND PRESENT A COPY OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROCLAMATION. IN ADDITION TO PUERTO RICO, NAMIBIA AND THE BELGRADE NON-ALIGNED MEETING WERE DISCUSSED DURING THE HALF HOUR MEETING.

2. AMBASSADOR YOUNG BEGAN THE CONVERSATION BY CITING POINTS OUTLINED REF A., AND EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE PUERTO RICO ISSUE COULD CAUSE FUTILE DEBATE AND CONFRONTATION IN THE UN COMMITTEE OF 24 AND PERHAPS IN THE UNGA. TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE THERE COULD HINDER EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. HE NOTED CASTRO'S STATEMENT TO THE US MAYORS THAT CUBA COULD ACCEPT ANY STATUS FREELY CHOSEN BY THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE. SINCE THIS WAS NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE US POSITION OUTLINED IN PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION, WHICH CLEARLY AND FIRMLY COMMITTED THE US TO SUPPORT ANY DECISION FREELY REACHED BY THE PUERTO
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RICAN PEOPLE, HE HOPED THAT CUBA WOULD NOT PRESS FOR DISCUSSION OF THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE THIS YEAR.

3. ROA MENTIONED THAT USINT HAD DISCUSSED ISSUE WITH GOC IN HAVANA, THEN CONFIRMED THAT CASTRO'S STATEMENT RO THE MAYORS WAS THE CUBAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO. HE ASSERTED THAT CUBA DID NOT WANT TO CAUSE A CONFRONTATION

IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24. CUBA WOULD ACCEPT A FREE EXPRESSION OF THE WILL OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE, WHATEVER THAT MIGHT BE. HE SAID IT WOULD NOT BE CUBA, BUT THE REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL GROUPS THAT WOULD RAISE THE ISSUE IN THE UN. HOWEVER, AS WITH SWAPO, THE CUBANS WOULD NOT OPPOSE DECISIONS OR ACTIONS OF PUERTO RICAN NATIONALIST GROUPS.

4. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION, IN PARTIAL RESPONSE TO A QUERY ABOUT WHICH PUERTO RICAN GROUP THE CUBANS RECOGNIZED OR FAVORED, ROA REPEATED THAT CUBA WOULD RESPECT OF FREE EXPRESSION OF THE WILL OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE. HE AVOIDED SINGLING OUT ANY PARTICULAR GROUP FOR RECOGNITION OR SUPPORT.

5. IN RESPONSE TO OUR ASSERTION THAT THE LANGUAGE OF THE RESOLUTION ON PUERTO RICO ADOPTED BY NAM IN BELGRADE WAS CONSIDERED BY THE US TO BE STRONG AND PROVOCATIVE, ROA SAID THAT THE RESOLUTION WAS ESSENTIALLY A REAFFIRMATION OF AN EXISTING NAM POSITION.

6. ON NAMIBIA, YOUNG SAID THAT THE US APPRECIATED THE SUPPORT THAT ANGOLA HAD PROVIDED IN REACHING AN AGREEMENT ON THE WESTERN FIVE'S PROPOSALS, AND THAT WE REALIZED THAT FULL ANGOLAN COOPERATION WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT CUBAN AGREEMENT. ROA AGREED THAT THE US AND

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CUBA, ALTHOUGH HAVING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES ON THE CONFLICTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, SHARED A COMMON INTEREST IN FINDING SOLUTIONS WHICH RESULTED IN MAJORITY RULE.

7. ROA SAID HE WOULD RETURN TO HAVANA THIS WEEKEND TO REPORT TO CASTRO AND TAKE TWO WEEKS VACATION. HE WOULD RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO HIS RETURN.

8. COMMENT: THE CUBANS CAN BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE FIRMNESS OF THE US POSITION THAT THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE SHOULD NOT BE PUSHED IN THE UN, AND THAT ANY EFFORTS BY THEM TO PRESS THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE IN THE UN WILL HURT EFFORTS TO REACH ACCOMODATION ON OTHER MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. WHETHER THEIR STATED DESIRE TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION IN THE UN ON THIS ISSUE WILL PREVAIL OVER THEIR CONFLICTING POSITION OF SUPPORTING PUERTO RICAN NATIONALISTS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

9. NOTE: AMBASSADOR YOUNG DEPARTED FOR WASHINGTON BEFORE THIS MESSAGE WAS DRAFTED AND THEREFORE HAS NOT YET

SEEN IT. LEONARD

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